

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-23 (cancelled)

24. (new) A method for the preparation in a production line of a dairy product comprising a stage of introduction by continuous injection, via the production line, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at a given temperature  $T_1$ , higher than or equal to the melting temperature of said ester, and in particular ranging from 35 to 80°C, into a dairy composition having a given temperature  $T_2$  at least equal to  $T_1$ , corresponding to an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, in order to obtain a mixture,

said stage of introduction of the sterol and/or stanol ester taking place before a stage of homogenization of said mixture.

25. (new) The method according to claim 24, comprising a stage of continuous introduction of a sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$  ranging from 35 to 80°C, in particular from 40 to 70°C, and more particularly from 45 to 60°C, into the dairy composition.

26. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating the initial composition, said preheating stage being carried out at a temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being

carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of continuous introduction by injection of the sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, in order to obtain a mixture, and
- a stage of homogenization of said mixture.

27. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of heating a dairy composition corresponding to an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, said heating stage being carried out at a temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the heating temperature,
- a stage of introduction of the sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , into the abovementioned dairy composition at the heating temperature, in order to obtain a mixture, and a stage of homogenization of said mixture.

28. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of heating a dairy composition corresponding to an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, said heating stage being carried out at a temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and

preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the heating temperature,

- a stage of introduction of the sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , into the abovementioned dairy composition at the heating temperature, in order to obtain a mixture, and

- a stage of holding said mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a period sufficient to maintain the dairy composition originating from the heating stage for a period at the heating temperature, sufficient to destroy the vegetative microbial flora, in order to obtain a held mixture, and
- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned held mixture.

29. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at the temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,
- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of

approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture.

30. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at the temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and

preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

wherein the holding stage is followed by the following stages:

- a stage of fermentation of the heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network.

31. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at the temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

wherein the holding stage is followed by the following stages:

- a stage of fermentation of the heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass

being characterized in that it exhibits homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, in which the smoothing stage is followed by a stage corresponding to the addition of a fruit preparation without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever.

32. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,
- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at the temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,
- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,
- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

wherein the holding stage is followed by the following stages:

- a stage of fermentation of the heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, in which the smoothing stage is followed by a stage corresponding to the addition of a cereal composition without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever.

33. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition at the preheating temperature, of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at the temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

wherein the holding stage is followed by the following stages:

- a stage of fermentation of the heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass

being characterized in that it exhibits homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, in which the smoothing stage is followed by a stage corresponding to the addition of a fruit preparation without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever,

said method being characterized in that the fruit preparation comprises a thickener, in particular chosen from: xanthan gum, pectin, starch, in particular gelatinized, gelan gum, cellulose and its derivatives, guar and carob gum, and inulin, the concentration of these thickeners being approximately 0.4% to approximately 3% relative to the fruit preparation.

34. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,
- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,
- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,
- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating

temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network.

35. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to

approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

said initial milk-based composition being characterized in that it is without thickener,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network.

36. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a temperature  $T_2$  of preheating of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,
- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,
- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,
- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and

preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- a stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, and

- a stage of addition of a fruit preparation without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever.

37. (new) The method for the preparation of a dairy product according to claim 24, characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a temperature  $T_2$  of preheating of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at

approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- a stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network

formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, and

- a stage of addition of a fruit preparation without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever, said fruit preparation containing a thickener, in particular chosen from: alginates, xanthan gum, pectin, starch, in particular gelatinized, gelan gum, cellulose and its derivatives, guar and carob gum, and inulin, the concentration of these thickeners being approximately 0.4% to approximately 3% relative to the fruit preparation.

38. (new) The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the initial composition comprises milk, milk powder, milk proteins and an agent in a concentration such that it limits syneresis, said agent being in particular chosen from: the alginates, maltodextrins, pectins, soluble fibres, starch and inulin, and preferably being starch.

39. (new) The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the sterol and/or stanol ester is chosen from the group comprising: 22-dihydroergosterol, 7.24(28)-ergostadienol, campesterol, neospongosterol, 7-ergostenol, cerebisterol, corbisterol, stigmasterol, focosterol,  $\alpha$ -spinasterol, sargasterol, 7-dehydrocryonasterol, poriferasterol, chondrillasterol,  $\beta$ -sitosterol, cryonasterol ( $\gamma$ -sitosterol), 7-stigmasternol, 22-stigmastenol, dihydro- $\gamma$ -sitosterol,  $\beta$ -sitostanol, 14-dehydroergosterol, 24(28)-dehydroergosterol, ergosterol, brassicasterol, ascosterol, episterol, fecosterol and 5-dihydroergosterol, and their mixtures and is advantageously

$\beta$ -sitosterol,  $\beta$ -sitostanol,  $\beta$ -sitostanol ester, campesterol or brassicasterol.

40. (new) The method according to claim 24, characterized in that the ratio of the sterol and/or stanol ester flow rate to the initial milk-based composition flow rate ranges from approximately 0.5 to approximately 3.

41. (new) A product, being presented in the form of a dairy product of firm natural yogurt type, said product being as obtained according to the method of claim 24, said method being characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a preheating temperature  $T_2$  of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,
- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,
- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,
- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and

preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- an optional stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network.

42. (new) A product, being presented in the form of a dairy product of stirred natural or fruit yogurt type or drinking yogurt type, said product being as obtained according to the method of claim 24, said method being characterized in that it comprises the following stages:

- a stage of preheating an initial milk-based composition, containing milk proteins and without emulsifier, at a temperature  $T_2$  of preheating of approximately 50°C to approximately 70°C, in particular approximately 55°C to approximately 65°C, and preferably being carried out at

approximately 65°C, in order to obtain a dairy composition at the preheating temperature,

- a stage of introduction into the abovementioned dairy composition of at least one sterol and/or stanol ester at a temperature  $T_1$ , in order to obtain a mixture,

- a stage of homogenization of the abovementioned mixture at a pressure of approximately 100 bars to approximately 280 bars, in particular approximately 100 bars to approximately 250 bars, advantageously approximately 100 bars to approximately 200 bars, and preferably approximately 200 bars, in order to obtain a homogenized mixture,

- a stage of heating the abovementioned homogenized mixture, said heating being carried out at a heating temperature of approximately 85°C to approximately 100°C, in particular approximately 87°C to approximately 97°C, advantageously approximately 87°C to approximately 95°C, and preferably being carried out at approximately 95°C, in order to obtain a heated homogenized mixture, and

- a stage of holding the abovementioned heated homogenized mixture, said holding stage being carried out for a duration of approximately 4 minutes to approximately 10 minutes, in particular approximately 5 to approximately 8 minutes, and preferably being carried out for approximately 6 minutes, in order to obtain a heated and homogenized held mixture,

- a stage of fermentation of the abovementioned heated and homogenized held mixture, carried out at a temperature of approximately 30°C to approximately 47°C, in particular approximately 35°C to approximately 45°C, and preferably approximately 38°C to approximately 42°C, in order to obtain a fermented mixture, and

- a stage of smoothing the abovementioned fermented mixture, in order to obtain a final white mass, comprising a fatty phase, corresponding to the sterol and/or stanol ester, included by the homogenization stage in the protein network

formed by the milk proteins and the milk of the abovementioned initial composition, said final white mass being characterized in that it exhibits a homogeneity between the fatty phase and the protein network, and exhibits no phase difference between the aqueous phase and the protein network, and

- a stage of addition of a fruit preparation without sterol and/or stanol in any form whatever.

43. (new) A product as obtained according to the method according to claim 24, containing approximately 0.1% to approximately 3% sterol and/or stanol ester, and in particular approximately 0.5% to approximately 2.5% sterol and/or stanol ester, advantageously approximately 1% to approximately 1.6% sterol and/or stanol ester.